

Letters For Leaders – Titus (Part 3)

The four letters we are studying in this series were written by the Apostle Paul, probably while he was in prison toward the end of his ministry. They are unique among all his writings because they are PERSONAL, addressed to individuals in leadership roles rather than to churches as a whole. Also, Paul has had a “mentoring role” in the lives and ministries of each of these young leaders, so he feels at liberty to speak freely. Here more than anywhere else we see Paul being transparent about ministry.

Two of Paul’s young protégés in ministry are Timothy and Titus. Each of them is a pastor, but they are from different backgrounds, and they minister in vastly different circumstances. While Timothy lives in metropolitan Ephesus, Titus lives on the island of Crete. However, the principles of good leadership taught and modeled by Paul are universal.

Paul had left Titus on the island of Crete to “set in order” the local assemblies and ordain elders in every city. This had been Paul’s policy throughout his travels, but he had not been able to stay in Crete long enough to accomplish this task. So in the first chapter, he gives a list of character qualifications for Titus to look for as he appoints leaders, and then he urges Titus to deal strongly with false teachers who may have an appealing message, but have no character to back it up. **Leadership is about competency, but Christian leadership is first about character.**

Titus 2:1 But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine:

Paul now begins to talk about Christian behavior, because **belief that doesn’t affect our behavior is worthless**. He instructs Titus to teach lifestyle practices to the saints that are “becoming” to sound doctrine. **If our doctrine is HEALTHY (“sound”), our lives will be HOLY.**

Paul has a mentoring relationship with Titus, and he wants to ensure that this kind of discipling relationship is replicated throughout the church – because **good disciples make good disciples!** He gives different instructions for different categories of people – older men, older women, younger women, younger men, and slaves (think “employees”) – because we face different challenges at different ages and stages of life.

Titus 2:2-6 That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience. The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed. Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded.

AGED MEN:

- Sober – “discreet; not extreme, extravagant or excessive”
- Grave – “serious; dignified, honorable, worthy of respect”
- Temperate – “self-controlled; moderate in opinion, careful”
- Sound in Faith – “healthy; whole, uncorrupted in conviction”
- In Charity – “affectionate; benevolent, kind, tender”
- In Patience – “constancy; cheerful and hopeful endurance”

AGED WOMEN:

- In Behaviour as Becometh Holiness – “a lifestyle that is becoming, suitable, pleasing, appropriate and attractive to holiness”
- Not False Accusers – “slanderers, gossipers” (Greek: “devils”)
- Not Given to Much Wine – “in bondage to wine (i.e. “banqueting”)
- Teachers of Good Things – “examples of actions and attitudes”

YOUNG WOMEN:

- Sober – “discreet; not extreme, extravagant or excessive”
- Love Their Husbands – “affectionate, fond” (Greek: “philandros”)
- Love Their Children – “maternal instinct, fond” (Greek: “philoteknos”)
- Discreet – “disciplined, self-controlled” (same root as “sober” in 2:4)
- Chaste – “innocent; modest, pure, clean from defilement”
- Keepers at Home – “guard; busy, stayer, domestically inclined”
- Good – “honorable; honest, fair, worthy, kind”
- Obedient to Their Own Husbands – “submitted; in subjection, under”

“That the word of God be not blasphemed” – Our culture may disagree with biblical doctrine, but they should be impressed with a biblical lifestyle. A Christian family should be the envy of every family on their street! **Your HOME is to be a model of what the Bible teaches.**

The world may not like it when we talk about self-control and submission – but they will find it attractive when we live it! They may be repelled by Christian teachings on morality and marriage – but they will be attracted to Christian lives and marriages when they see the Bible lived out daily. **AN APOSTOLIC LIFE IS A GOOD LIFE!**

Mothers of young children! Don’t let culture define you by what you do or don’t do for a career. **Your greatest contribution to the Kingdom of God may not be something you DO, but someone you RAISE.**

YOUNG MEN:

- Sober Minded – “disciplined, self-controlled”
- Notice that young men receive only one word of exhortation!

- Notice that Titus is told to teach aged men, aged women, and young men – but not young women! (They are to be taught by the aged women, so Titus can avoid temptation or any hint of immorality.) Remember that Titus' job is to “ordain ELDERS” (1:5) in the church. Elder means a “mature” man – qualified by character and consistency, more than age. Not every older man should be permitted to be an elder, and not every younger man should be prevented from being an elder! But elders are normally “older” because being older brings experience.

If you are YOUNG, find someone to disciple you.

If you are OLD, find someone to disciple.

If you are IN BETWEEN, then do both!

LEADERS ARE TO BE A “PATTERN” FOR OTHERS IN ALL THINGS!

Titus 2:7-8 In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.

Titus is a leader and a pastor, but notice that Paul writes more about “Titus the EXAMPLE” than he does about “Titus the EXHORTER” – because a leader leads best by what he DOES, not what he SAYS.

But words are still important! A leader is to use “sound speech” (healthy words), so that even enemies can't twist his words to use against him.

Titus 2:9-10 Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again; Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

SLAVES (EMPLOYEES):

- Obedient – do what you are asked
- Please them well – do MORE than what you are asked
- Not answering again – don't talk back, don't argue
- Not purloining – don't steal (by taking, or by holding back effort)
- Fidelity – consistency, outward actions matching inward convictions
- Adorn the doctrine – “beautify the Bible” in the eyes of others

Titus 2:11-14 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that

he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

GRACE IS THE POWER TO LIVE ABOVE SIN! GRACE TEACHES US!

Christians are to DENY (“refuse, reject, contradict”) ungodliness (whatever is unlike God), and the worldly lusts that cause it – and instead we are to live “soberly” (attitude and actions toward **OURSELVES**), “righteously” (toward **OTHERS**), and “godly” (toward **GOD**).

Christians live IN this present world, but they do not live LIKE this present world, and they do not live FOR this present world.

One motivation in living godly lives is the hope of Heaven, and the soon appearing of Jesus Christ. But an even greater motivation is our LOVE for a Saviour who gave Himself to redeem us from iniquity. His desire is to have a pure, peculiar people who LOVE (“zealous”) to do good works!

We live between TWO APPEARINGS ... the first appearing was the GRACE of God (2:11) and the second appearing will be the GLORY of God (2:13). Verse 11 is behind us and verse 13 is ahead of us – we are “pushed” by grace and “pulled” by glory – and we are to live our lives in light of BOTH appearances.

LEGALISM says, “What we DO leads to who we ARE.”

GRACE says, “Who we ARE leads to what we DO.”

(Grace does NOT say, “What we do doesn't matter.”)

Titus 2:15 These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.

“Titus, teach with authority! Don't let anyone intimidate you!”

Titus 3:1-3 Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men. For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.

Christians were exhorted to be good citizens during the time of the brutal Roman Empire! How much more should we be good citizens today? **Our heavenly citizenship doesn't excuse us from our earthly citizenship!** Paul tells us not to be critical of our unsaved neighbors – after all, before the grace of God came, we acted exactly the same way as they do!

Titus 3:4-7 But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have

done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. It was the KINDNESS and LOVE of God toward us that made the difference! Paul has been exhorting us to do “GOOD WORKS” throughout this epistle, but we need to put them in proper perspective – **we don’t do good works to GET saved, but because we ARE saved!** Our good works are simply our thankfulness for His great MERCY.

“Washing of Regeneration” = Baptism in Jesus’ Name!
“Renewing of the Holy Ghost” = Baptism of the Holy Ghost!

Titus 3:8 This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.

Church leaders are to stress that believers are to “maintain good works.” And since there will always be those who disagree with the DISCIPLINE required for discipleship, Paul tells us to avoid their arguments entirely. People who like to argue about “minor areas” of the Bible are nearly always covering up their disobedience to “major areas” of the Bible!

Titus 3:9-11 But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain. A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.

A heretic is literally “one who causes division.” **DI-VISION means “two visions.”** This is someone who tries to get a following by going from person to person, trying to force others to take sides on an issue. They are to be warned twice, and then disfellowshipped if they will not submit. Why? Because they are “subverted” (“warped in character”) and will not stop sinning. It is not the church that has condemned them – they are “self-condemned.” Some people think this is too “authoritarian,” but this is exactly the same process outlined by Jesus Himself!

Matthew 18:15-17 Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.

Paul closes his epistle with personal greetings, as usual – and with yet another reminder to “maintain good works” (3:14). He wants to send either Artemas or Tychicus to Crete to look after the church temporarily so Titus can visit him. We don’t know who Zenas the lawyer is, but we do remember Apollos, the eloquent evangelist, from 1 Corinthians.

1 Corinthians 3:4 For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?

Apollos was a preacher who was being compared to and exalted above Paul, by people in the churches that Paul had started! With this going on, it would have been easy for Paul to feel competitive or even bitter toward Apollos. But Paul didn’t see him as a rival – in fact, he instructs Titus to “diligently” help him in his travels, and to be sure he is wanting nothing. Division and competition should NOT be part of the Apostolic church!

Titus 3:12-15 When I shall send Artemas unto thee, or Tychicus, be diligent to come unto me to Nicopolis: for I have determined there to winter. Bring Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey diligently, that nothing be wanting unto them. And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful. All that are with me salute thee. Greet them that love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen.

“All that are with me salute thee.” Paul’s life is constantly intertwined with others who are preaching the gospel, and especially with young leaders. **Paul shared the gospel in the context of sharing LIFE with people.** And that’s what we see in the book of Titus. DISCIPLESHIP is to take place in a community of believers, and involve every generation – **because good disciples make good disciples!**

1 Thessalonians 2:8 So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.